



King County

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Text File Report

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Management and
Natural Resources
Committee

Sponsors: Dow Constantine, Bob Ferguson

A MOTION relating to county efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, mitigate their impacts and prepare for climate change.

WHEREAS, there is a consensus among the world's leading scientists that global warming pollution by humans is among the most significant problems facing the world today, and

WHEREAS, climate scientists at the University of Washington predict that average temperatures in the northwest will increase approximately one degree fahrenheit per decade in the twenty-first century, and

WHEREAS, climate change in the northwest is expected to result in reduced snowpack and associated drinking water supplies, changes in winter flooding patterns, reduced summer stream flows for fish and altered habitat for other wildlife, and

WHEREAS, in September 1988, Proposed Ordinance 88-662 was introduced with the intent of creating an office of science and technology planning to address the issues of ozone depletion and global warming, and

WHEREAS, in 2002 the King County executive signed Executive Order PHL 10-1(AEO), by which the executive created a countywide initiative to inventory and reduce global warming pollution caused by greenhouse gas emissions ("carbon" or "carbon equivalents"), and

WHEREAS, in January, 2002, the council adopted Motion 11364 that approved participation in the Cities for Climate Protection Campaign and supported the executive's development of an action plan to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and targeted air pollutants from county operations, and

WHEREAS, the county has created one of the most comprehensive emissions inventories, also known as a carbon inventory, of any local government in the United States, and this work has built organizational expertise and resources in the departments of King County for future emissions reduction planning and sale of carbon credits, and

WHEREAS, actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions can also benefit local economies and improve quality of life through increased energy efficiency, sustainable transportation, waste reduction, water conservation and open space protection, and

WHEREAS, management practices at the Cedar Hills landfill prevent more than three hundred thousand metric tons of methane-based greenhouse gas emissions annually from entering the atmosphere, and

WHEREAS, the county has initiated a gas-to-energy project at Cedar Hills that will convert methane gas to energy and further reduce gas emissions, and

WHEREAS, the county has also undertaken innovative energy cogeneration projects at its wastewater treatment plants, and

WHEREAS, King County Metro Transit provides more than one hundred million trips annually with a fuel efficient, environmentally friendly alternative to the private automobile, and

WHEREAS, King County Metro Transit received a 2004 National Clean Bus Leadership Award from the Environmental and Energy Study Institute for its role in developing a market for ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel, and

WHEREAS, King County Metro Transit spurred development of an important new technology and realized a fuel savings of approximately twenty percent in 2004 with one of the first major fleet purchases of over two hundred

Conference of Mayors climate protection agreement, and

WHEREAS, the United States Conference of Mayors climate protection agreement includes commitments to strive to meet or beat the Kyoto Protocol targets in local communities through actions ranging from antisprawl land use policies to urban forest restoration projects to public information campaigns, to urge state governments and the federal government to enact policies and programs to meet or beat the greenhouse gas emission reduction target of the Kyoto Protocol, and to urge the United States Congress to pass greenhouse gas reduction legislation, which would establish a national emission trading system, and

WHEREAS, metropolitan counties, with larger land areas, a mix of urban and rural land uses, regional transportation systems and regional infrastructure have a unique and complementary role to play in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and preparing for the impacts of climate change;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

A. King County shall work with other counties through cooperative intergovernmental frameworks like the International Council on Local Environmental Initiatives and the Washington State Association of Counties to develop a model climate change resolution tailored to climate change actions that can adopted by county governments;

B. King County shall work with other counties active in climate change initiatives and with national organizations such as the National Association of Counties to kick-off a national, Counties Climate Change Initiative as a companion effort to the United States Conference of Mayors climate protection agreement;

C. King County shall finalize a Climate Change Toolkit by October 31, 2006 and make it available to local governments throughout the nation as part of a Counties Climate Change Initiative;

D. The executive shall develop a King County Climate Change Mitigation and Preparedness Plan ("the plan") and file eleven copies with the clerk of the council by February 1, 2007, for distribution to all councilmembers;

E. The plan shall include actions related to carbon inventories, land use, environmental management, emergency preparedness, energy use and transportation, and shall include specific performance measures for recommended actions;

1. In the short-term, the county shall set a target of increasing the amount of biodiesel used in all county diesel vehicles to twenty percent;

for implementing transportation and alternative fuels actions in the plan, and report on them as part of the annual report.